

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 6 are in the application.

As a result of the forgoing Amendment, claim 3 has been amended to correct a typographical error.

Applicant has noted that the Examiner has indicated that claim 3 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

However, Applicant respectfully submits that, as will become clear from the discussion below, the claims as presently set forth in the application are patentable over the art of record.

Applicant respectfully submits the rejections of the claims are untenable for the following reasons.

The reference to Matsuo does not disclose a method for checking or calibrating an array microphone. The operation carried out in the microphone array of Matsuo is in fact a normal operation. The device of the reference is a bidirectional communication device for two speakers. One of the speakers, speaker (5), is picked up by the microphones of the array, and an output signal is generated therefrom. The signal of the second

speaker, i.e., the speech signal from the remote side, is connected as an input signal to the loud speaker (6). In the event that both speakers speak simultaneously, the signal emitted by the speaker (6) is interpreted as a noise signal, because it is picked up by the microphone array simultaneously with the signal of the speaker (5). The signal of the loudspeaker (6) is now filtered out by comparing in the filter coefficient calculator (4) the total signal picked up by the microphones with the input signal. From the cross-type correlation it is possible to determine the portion of the noise signal, i.e., the signal of the loudspeaker (6). The total signal picked up by the microphones is compared to the input signal in the filter coefficient calculator (4). Depending on this proportion, the filter coefficients of the filter are changed accordingly, so that the only remaining output signal is the signal of the speaker (5) and only this signal is transmitted. This is essentially a type of echo suppression. It is the position of the Applicant that the reference to Matsuo is not even remotely of the same type as the device of the present application because the reference does neither mention a "method for checking" nor a "method for calibration", as set forth in claims 2 and 5 respectively.

Another very important point is the fact that those skilled in the art would never consider combining the references to Matsuo and Vatter. The simple reason for this is that the input signal in Matsuo is in reality not a test signal, but the signal from a speaker at a remote location. It would make absolutely no sense if those skilled in the art would send some random test signals instead of the desired signal of the speaker. This would make the bidirectional speaker connection impossible.

Another aspect has to be mentioned in connection with the reference to Vatter. The Examiner has referred to the reference to Vatter in connection with the periodic noise signal of the claims of the present application. This is mentioned in the specification, page 4, paragraph 44. In this passage it is mentioned that "continuous pulses of a test signal are transmitted...". However, the expression "continuous pulses" does not necessarily mean periodic pulses, but may include in its meaning also periodic pulses. Accordingly, the reference to Vatter does not disclose or suggest the present invention as claimed.

In addition, aside from the above considerations, there are additional significant differences between the manner of signal processing. In the present invention response signals of the

individual microphones are compared before and/or after the processing through the filters with "model signals", wherein the properly operating microphones and/or filters correspond to claims 2 and 5. However, the reference to Matsuo does not disclose model signals which could be compared to the recorded signals. Moreover, claim 5 mentions that due to the deviations of the response signals from the model signal, changes of individual filter coefficients are carried out. The references of the Examiner to the method steps or features of the reference to Matsuo, paragraph 0086, are believed to be not on target because the paragraph referred to by the Examiner does not in any way mention model signals, deviations, comparisons, etc.

The remaining references either do not relate to an array (Sasaki) or have no loud speakers (Feng) or relate to simple echo suppression (Finn), or are similar to Matsuo to the extent that no test signals are transmitted, but rather signals of a remote speaker (Belt). The reference does not disclose model signals anywhere. The remaining references to Shuttleworth and Flentje have been reviewed; however, they also do not disclose or suggest the present invention as claimed.



Reconsideration and allowance of the present application is respectfully requested.

Any additional fees or charges required at this time in connection with this application may be charged to Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 11-1835.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: November 8, 2007

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on November 8, 2007.

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Date: November 8, 2007